

Frequently Asked Questions about the Long Term Strategic Plan

What is a strategic plan?

In its simplest form, a strategic plan is a document that should offer direction and guidance to help boost performance. It helps an organization to refocus energies and ensure that all team members are working towards the same goal(s). As a process, strategic planning involves a sequence of activities, each a vital element including:

- (1) Assessing the external environment;
- (2) Assessing internal capacity and organization;
- (3) Developing a vision and a mission for the future;
- (4) Developing goals and objectives - the actions - for reaching that future;
- (5) Implementing the plan; and
- (6) Measuring progress and revising the plan, as needed.

The long term recreation strategic plan will be a document that summarizes why the recreation program exists, what it is trying to accomplish, and how it will go about doing so. In this case, it is a comprehensive plan for accomplishing certain goals and objectives, providing long-term (5-10 year) direction. The document will include specific actions and timeframes to achieve the stated goals, will identify the desired end result and will provide performance plans and measures to track the progress of achieving the desired outcomes.

What is included in the Long Term Recreation Strategic Plan?

This plan includes several sections that in brief, ask and answer the following questions:

1. Where is the Corps Recreation Program now and what do we envision for the Corps Recreation Program in the future?
2. What trends and forces will shape the future of the Corps Recreation Program?
3. How does the Corps Recreation Program fit into the larger context of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, other recreation providers and the needs of the public?
4. What does the Corps Recreation Program want to accomplish and how will we achieve that desired outcome?

When will the plan be released?

The team is finalizing draft goals and objectives. A series of briefs will be scheduled with leadership. This long-term strategic plan is scheduled for completion in FY 11 for immediate use as applicable and in FY 13 budget development and beyond.

Is this just another plan that will sit on the shelf?

This plan builds upon previous efforts, notably the May 2008 Recreation Strategy Implementation Plan and 2009 Recreation Roadmap. The end-state of this effort will consist of a comprehensive strategy, encompassing elements from the Recreation Roadmap and other initiatives identified by the PDT. This effort is intended to provide strategic information, a variety of options and most importantly, the initiative to Corps leadership at all levels. As requested by Mr. Mike Ensich and stated in the Project Management Plan, this effort is intended to provide direction to Corps leadership to transform the Corps recreation program and position it for the future. Both Natural Resources Management Chief Mary Coulombe and Recreation Program/Business Line Manager Pep Persio fully support this effort and have been closely involved with the PDT.

Have the decisions already been made and is the PDT just in place to support those?

From initiation, the PDT developing the Strategy was given no predetermined specifics on how to complete the plan. PDT members come from project, district and division levels bringing with

them varied expertise and experiences to the effort. The team has been given no specific charges other than to develop “a single comprehensive strategy to **transform** the Corps Recreation Program and **position** it for the future. – ‘Take it to Great”.

Where are you getting your information?

The PDT is comprised of a diverse group from across the country and from various levels within the recreation program. In addition, there is representation from the planning and hydropower communities. This group brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the project.

The PDT has been in contact with the leaders of other teams, projects and initiatives related to the Recreation Business Line.

The team is also examining existing program capabilities and limitations to create a plan that is adaptable, responsive and implementable. This long-term strategic plan will be completed in FY 11 for immediate use as applicable and in FY 13 budget development and beyond.

How was my input used?

We received responses from a variety of methods. Approximately 153 individuals participated in the Strategic Plan Sessions at the 2010 NRM Conference. Over 100 individuals responded to our request for input and completed a survey form. Additional responses were provided via e-mail or during information sessions hosted locally by PDT members. High level analysis has been conducted on your comments and yielded key themes that have been incorporated into the draft goals and objectives. We thank everyone who provided these comments and the PDT will continue to use them in developing specific actions steps that can be used to implement and accomplish the goals and objectives. To see a summary file or all the comments received, please visit the Strategic Plan website:

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/recroadmap/ltspl.cfm>

Is this just an exercise that will justify closing my recreation area(s)? No, the process is a commitment to identify both long and short term operational changes and efficiencies to better position the program for the future. A wide range of improvements and adjustments will be considered, but there are no predetermined outcomes for this effort. The team is working to balance new resources, unearth new and share existing efficiencies, and expand successful practices used in the past to limit impacts to the Corps recreation footprint.

What else is there to cut; what else do you expect me to do?

Corps managers have made tough decisions on personnel, resources and services to continually provide high quality recreational opportunities at well managed facilities while also conserving and protecting natural resources. Continued ingenuity, cost-sharing, creative thinking and adaptability will assist the organization in developing, implementing and maintaining a sustainable program to meet the diverse recreation needs of our users.

How will this plan impact my staffing levels?

At this point that is an unknown. Corps park ranger staffing varies widely throughout the country and no national, regional, or local staffing models exist. The team will work to uncover and share best practices to increase our staffing efficiencies. The Plan maintains a strong commitment to developing, building and maintaining a technically competent workforce that will serve our visitors needs.

What will my role be in all of this, what is in it for me?

This is your plan, and the input you provided was used to identify issue areas and creative solutions to organizational challenges. This effort is geared toward sustaining the Corps recreation program for the public resulting in sustainable, safe, and long term access to the nation's water resources for recreational activities. Once the plan is released, we will be looking for staff to share how they are contributing to the achievement of the goals and objectives and sharing their successes and challenges with the entire NRM community.